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SATURDAY, AUGUST 20, 1870.

PRICE { 4d. Unstamped.
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CRYSTAL PALACE.—THIS DAY (SATURDAY)
—OPERA and AFTERNOON PROMENADE.—First time "MASANI-
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THE ITALIAN OPERAS—DRURY LANE

(Continued from p. 538.)

The production of Weber's *Abu Hassan* in an Italian dress, conjointly with *L'Oca del Cairo*, a comic opera begun by Mozart with great enthusiasm in 1783, the year after *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, but, when scarcely half completed, abandoned for *Le Nozze di Figaro*, would alone have conferred a mark of distinction upon the Drury Lane season just expired. It is refreshing now and then to get away from the well-worn groove which has confined us for so many years to certain works of Donizetti, Bellini, Verdi, Flotow, &c., comparatively excluding even Mozart and Rossini, and positively excluding other composers, Italian, German, French, and English, who have written much that is worth hearing, but who rarely, if ever, get a chance of being heard. That the musical public were indebted for these interesting operas of Weber and Mozart to the same presiding intelligence which at Her Majesty's Theatre was the cause of several neglected masterpieces of Gluck, Mozart, Cherubini, Weber, Otto Nicolai, &c., being revived, is, we believe, a fact. Mr. Jarrett has done for Mr. Wood at Drury Lane what he did for Mr. Mapleson at Her Majesty's Theatre. He would be just the "acting manager," if permitted to follow the dictates of his own conscience, to give us an operatic season without one single performance of *Lucia*, *Lucrezia*, *Linda*, *Norma*, *La Sonnambula*, *Martha*, *Il Trovatore*, *La Traviata*, and the like. What a refreshing season that would be for musicians and connoisseurs! But "Fashion" stands in the way; and "Fashion" would have nothing to do either with *Abu Hassan* or the *Oca del Cairo*. Nevertheless, both were most effectively presented. The *Abu Hassan* of Weber, a comic opera in one act, built, as everyone knows who cares to know, upon the tale of "The Sleeper Awakened" in the *Thousand and One Nights*, is as pure Weber as *Der Freischütz* itself, though produced in 1811, some ten years earlier than *Der Freischütz*. The *Oca del Cairo*, while in some sort a concoction—pieces from *Zaide*, the *Sposo Deluso* and other works being introduced to fill up the gaps left by the composer, those numbers which he left barely sketched being instrumented for the orchestra by a modern hand, and a new libretto founded upon the original one of Abbe Varesco of Salzburg,* with whom, as his correspondence shows, Mozart was dissatisfied, consists nevertheless, of music produced when the genius of the author of *Figaro* and *Don Giovanni* was in its prime. The whole, moreover, is so skilfully arranged that few unacquainted with the historical facts would guess that the opera had not come from Mozart's own portfolio just as it is now heard at Drury Lane. M. Wilder, who prepared the new libretto for the French theatre at which the *Oca del Cairo* was first produced, deserves great credit; and still greater credit is due to Signor Bottesini, who has set the dialogue to musical recitative for the Italian version. Both operas, as we have hinted, received every justice at the hands of the chief performers at Drury Lane. Mesdames Trebelli-Bettini and Monbelli, as Abu Hassan and Fatima, especially distinguished themselves in the opera of Weber—for which, by the way, Signor Arditì had composed recitations with an ability not less noticeable than that displayed by Signor Bottesini in the *Oca del Cairo*. In Mozart's work the principal singers were Madame Sinico, Mdlle. Lewitzky (of whom we have already spoken), Mr. Charles Lyall, Signors Gassier and Gardoni. We need not go into details; but we must add, with great regret, that the united attractions of these scarcely known works of Weber and Mozart amounted to little. *Abu Hassan* and *L'Oca del Cairo*, in fact, did not "draw," and were consequently played but twice or thrice at the most.

To say truly, our great operatic public, which arrogates to itself the prerogative of *arbiter eleganterum* in matters connected with musical art, cares little or nothing for music in the abstract. It cares for executive "combinations"—as, for example, in the *Flauto Magico*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Figaro*, when a number of recognized artists of the first class can be heard together on the same night; and it cares still more for the popular *prima donna* of the hour. That the popular *prima donna* just now, and likely to be so for some time hence, is Mdlle. Christine Nilsson, can hardly be denied; and the mere announcement in the bills that Mdlle. Nilsson would appear on such or such a night in such or such an opera, sufficed to keep numbers away from the theatre, in anticipation of that glad event. Her first part was the well-worn Lucia, in which though evidently (net affectedly, as was afterwards clearly shown) indisposed, she brought back the old impressions, and again with her incomparably beautiful voice, reminded her hearers of the *ars celare artem* which lends to her singing a charm so strong, so fresh, and so abiding. Shortly afterwards, however, she achieved a still greater success in *Robert le Diable*. Her impersonation of Alice was by many amateurs unhesitatingly compared with that of another celebrated Swedish songstress, who when, in 1847, Mr. Lumley revived the earliest French opera of Meyerbeer at Her Majesty's Theatre, made her *début* among us in the same character. We do not care to institute comparisons, but are willing to own that there is much in common both as to conception of character and execution of the music, between the Alice of Mdlle. Nilsson and the Alice of Jenny Lind. Nevertheless, if our advice be worth anything, we urgently counsel Mdlle. Nilsson to play such parts very seldom, and indeed, as a rule, to avoid Meyerbeer as much as practicable. Her voice is not fitted to stand the necessary strain and consequent fatigue

attendant on such exacting music. After two or three performances in *Robert le Diable* and one in *Faust* (with M. Faure) Mdlle. Nilsson fell ill; and her illness endured so long as almost to ruin the theatre. Nothing else would attract—not *Le Nozze di Figaro* and the "combination;" not Madame Volpini, with her well-feigned *espèglerie*; not M. Faure, with all his popularity; not even what was perhaps the most admirable performance of *Dinorah* ever witnessed in this country, when Mdlle. Lima di Murska, the most genial, shadowy, and best of all *Dinorahs*. Mr. Santley, the best Hoel, Signor Gardoni, the best Corentin, and Madame Trebelli-Bettini as the Goatherd, combined their talents in honour of Meyerbeer. Nothing would attract; and thus we had another exemplification of the questionable tendency of the "star" system. Fine music and a fine *ensemble* pass for nought; but let once the popular lady of the hour show herself, and all is immediately *couleur de rose*, all goes well and smoothly, every one is pleased, and art may take its chance. On her recovery Mdlle. Nilsson appeared as the Countess in *Le Nozze* and as Elvira in *Don Giovanni*—both revealing her as an adept in the classic school of Mozart. Elvira she had played already; but the Countess was a new part, and a new success. It would be difficult to sing "Porgi amor" and "Dove Sono" better. Rossini's *Otello* came next, and afforded Mdlle. Nilsson yet another opportunity of distinction in a part she had never previously assumed. No character in the established repertory can be imagined more happily suited to her than the gentle, suffering Desdemona; and few who witnessed her graceful delineation, or listened to her touching accents in the "Willow" song, with which Desdemona vainly tries to alleviate her sorrows, could have left the theatre unmoved by an exhibition of art at once so genuine and effortless. With the florid music of Rossini's earlier period,* of which *Otello* contains many striking examples, Mdlle. Nilsson showed herself thoroughly conversant. But we must not linger on details. It will answer all purposes to add that the Desdemona of the accomplished Swede more than came up to general expectation—great as that expectation had been. The opera was in almost every instance well represented. If Signor Mongini's vocal proficiency and dramatic intelligence were equal to his physical gifts, he would be the precise Othello. Rossini must have had in his mind. Donzellini himself could not boast a more magnificent voice. The Iago of M. Faure has only been surpassed by the Iago of Ronconi; Signor Gardoni is an excellent Roderigo, Signor Foli is an imposing Elmiro, and Mdlle. Cari an Emilia alike prepossessing and unobtrusive. It was, moreover, a treat to listen to once again to melodies which time cannot make stale, and to concerted pieces as ingenious in design as they are masterly in treatment. Either of the *finales* in *Otello* would be the fortune of a modern opera.

Upon *Mignon*, which followed *Otello*, and thanks chiefly to Mdlle. Nilsson's impersonation of the heroine, became the attractive feature of the season, we need not dilate. Our musical readers are acquainted with all that they need care to know about it. How MM. Barbier and Carré have accommodated Goethe and his famous romance to their purpose has been described at such length by our contemporaries, daily and weekly, that we refrain from approaching the, after all, not over-fertile topic. Besides, it little matters. *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and other works of genius, have been handled in the same fashion, and with a similar object in view. On the whole, too, what MM. Barbier and Carré have done (the custom being winked at, be it understood) they have done so cleverly that we have no wish to arraign them for high treason against the majesty of Goethe. M. Thomas was, we think, more successful in finding pleasing and appropriate music for *Mignon* than afterwards, when undertaking the same duty for *Hamlet*. The subject lies easier within his grasp, inasmuch as while Ophelia seems to move among beings more or less supernatural, Mignon is surrounded with types of ordinary humanity. M. Thomas has given to each of these a distinguishing character. Feline, the coquette, Lothario, the old harper, and above all, Mignon, stand out in well-defined individual prominence. The music, if never strikingly original, is full of stir and bustle, and the passages in which Mignon is directly concerned are sentimental without any approach to that mandolin expression which, especially with French composers, so often passes for sentiment. The general performance of the opera of M. Ambroise Thomas, as well as the manner in which it was put upon the stage, reflected credit on the theatre. Nothing could be more impressive than the Lothario of M. Faure, nothing more brilliant than the Feline of Madame Volpini. Of Wilhelm Meister himself (as those acquainted with the German romance might have guessed in advance) neither the authors of the book nor the composer of the music could make anything; it was therefore not surprising that Signor Bettini, a very useful and painstaking tenor, should equally fail to endow that personage with interest.

Not less unamenable to dramatists and composer was Frederick, Wilhelm's rival in the graces of Feline; and though M. Thomas added a song, expressly to reconcile Madame Trebelli-Bettini, that practised singer could succeed in making little out of the music and less out of the character. But in her impersonation of Mignon Mdlle. Nilsson achieved one of those successes which, in French idiom, "font époque." Reports from abroad had been circulated about this unique performance; but the reality surpassed anticipation. Each phase in the life of the dreaming maiden is poetically realized;—the drudgery under Giorno, her cruel master, before Mignon is conscious that she has a heart; the growing love for Wilhelm, her deliverer; the jealousy of and

* Who also wrote the libretto for *Idomeneo*.

* *Otello* was composed in 1816, just after the *Barbiers* and just before the *Cenerentola*. Rossini was then in his 25th year.

subsequent hatred for Filine, her dazzling and unscrupulous opponent; the despair turned into unbounded rapture when she finds that at last her love is reciprocated by Wilhelm—each and all were depicted to admiration. The liberty taken by the French dramatists in causing Mignon to live for happiness, instead of dying suddenly of a broken heart, is forgotten, or at least forgiven, under the attractive spell of Mlle. Nilsson's delineation. Her singing equals her acting; and so charmingly does she recount to us through the music of M. Thomas the characteristic features of her lost home, that we would give something to hear her tell the same story in the healthy and vigorous music of Beethoven—himself of opinion (and who could judge better?) that his own setting of “*Kennst du das Land?*” was perfection. That *Mignon* obtained an unqualified success is notorious. But for the unavoidable departure of Madame Volpini, and the difficulty of finding at a moment's notice a substitute, it might have been repeated, from time to time, up to the end of the season, instead of being given thrice and then abandoned. Why Madame Sinico, who is in every way competent, had not been advised to understudy the part of Filine, is hard to explain. In fact, with Madame Sinico in the theatre, we cannot see how Madame Volpini, who is in no way her superior and does not possess half her versatility, was wanted at all. As a result of this *embarras de richesses*, the opera was laid aside, and works already too familiar had again to be resorted to.

At length, however, Herr Wagner came to the rescue, with his *Fliegende Holländer*, “done into Italian,” by Signor Salvatore Marchesi, under the name of *L'Olandese Dannato*. We have several times been threatened with *Tannhäuser*, and more than once with *Lohengrin*, in the prospectuses of Her Majesty's Theatre. *Tannhäuser*, we understand, was even put into rehearsal, and the chorus of the indefatigable Signor Santi had almost mastered its part of the score. But, for reasons unexplained, season after season went by, and no opera exemplifying the “Art-work of the Future” appeared to enlighten while charming us. This time we are in luck. Whoever hit upon the idea of bringing out the first, and therefore the simplest composition in which is revealed the system by which all operatic art-work must henceforth be regulated deserves the thanks of the community. *Rienzi*, its immediate predecessor, would not have served the purpose half as well. In *Rienzi* we find nothing of the real Wagner, but, on the other hand, a great deal of weak Meyerbeer. The *Fliegende Holländer*, however, is the production of a wholly independent mind—we mean as regards *form*, because in so far as simple melodic invention is concerned, we are scarcely able to point out an original idea from the beginning of the opera to the end. Nevertheless, the entire thing is more or less interesting; and the music, in many respects, bears so close a resemblance to the music of ordinary mortals, that we can follow it without pain, and hear much of it with satisfaction. But it should be borne in mind that, although the *Holländer* is the first of three operas of which, in 1852, Herr Wagner published the librettos (*Drei Operndichtungen*), as models, with an explanatory communication “to his friends,” it came into the world, somewhat spontaneously, before the infallible formula had been issued, which, condemning all past attempts, asserts that “the error in opera, as a species of Art, has consisted in the fact, that a means of expression (Music) has been made the end, while the end of expression (Drama) has been made the means, so that the actual lyric Drama has been forced to rest upon the basis of absolute music;” thus at once disposing of Mozart, Cherubini, Beethoven, Rossini, and (excepting Rameau and Gluck, by the way) the rest of them. The *Holländer* also came long before that other tremendous oracle, abolishing the “patriarchal system of modulation,” and proclaiming aloud that—“all keys being equal and essentially related, the privileges of tone-families are abolished!” It was happy enough to be conceived in more bucolic times, when Herr Wagner was not a self-constituted demigod, and before *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft, Kunst und Revolution, Oper und Drama*, and other remarkable treatises had seen the light, before their author enjoyed the patronage of Liszt, and before Herr Brendel, the Leipsic publisher, had declared, in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, that in Wagner's operas, and in them only, was the truth.

The *Olandese Dannato* was brought out too late in the season to enable us to judge what might have been its success under more favourable circumstances. We are inclined to think that it would have been real, and, not unlikely, to be permanent. The well-known legend of the Flying Dutchman is set forth by Herr Wagner in his libretto with wonderful terseness and simplicity. Each of the characters is sharply defined, the most interesting being of course the fate-struck sea captain, and Senta, the pensive and enthusiastic maiden, who, at once deeply interested in the story of his life and enamoured of his portrait, cherishes an inward hope that the task of rescuing him from perdition may one day be her own. Daland the skipper, Senta's father, the unconscious instrument of fulfilling his daughter's aspirations, makes a pleasant contrast to this somewhat gloomy pair; while Erik, the hunter, Senta's human suitor, effectively completes the quartet of principals—choruses of Norwegian sailors and Norwegian peasant girls forming an effective and enlivening back-ground. Of the music we have not space to say more than that it is characteristic, dramatic, highly coloured, and occasionally beautiful. The orchestration, proceeding from a composer who contends that music should only play a subordinate part in the lyric drama, appears to us overwrought and extravagant; but those acquainted with the subsequent operas of Herr Wagner will bear us out that, in spite of the storm which, from the overture to the end, is almost incessantly raging,

the share assigned to the orchestra in the *Fliegende Holländer* is comparatively modest. In one respect the system of Herr Wagner is as clearly exemplified in this work as in any of its successors; a certain number of characteristic phrases, each appertaining to a particular character, a particular emotion, a particular incident, or a particular reminiscence, constituting the material out of which the entire fabric is constructed. One or more of these phrases, or passages, is invariably present, heard in this or that shape, and conferring a kind of homogeneity by no means either illogical or unacceptable.

The performance at Drury Lane Theatre was for the most part so good as to deserve not only applause but crowded audiences. Of applause there was enough, and to spare; but at both representations the house was scantily attended. What had become of the “faithful” it was impossible to say. Every absent Wagnerite lost an opportunity of fortifying his belief that, for some time at least, may not again occur. The overture to the *Holländer*, a boisterous prelude, in which all the individualizing phrases we have referred to as helping to make up the musical structure are jumbled together pell-mell, was grandly executed; and, indeed, the perfection generally of the orchestral accompaniments bore witness to the pains Signor Arditi must have taken in rehearsing a work the major part of which to a well-ordered Italian mind could hardly represent anything better than cacophony. The chorus, too, was efficient, if not quite as well up to the mark as the orchestra. The chief characters were mostly in competent hands, the exception being that of Erik, in which Signor Perotti exhibited more zeal than discretion. Signor Foli was excellent as Daland, and Signor Rinaldini excellent as the Helmsman. But Senta and the Dutchman were of course the prominent features. Mr. Santley, who, all through the season, in opera after opera, has been rendering valuable service, was at the eleventh hour rewarded by the opportunity afforded of creating for himself a new part—an opportunity of which he took signal advantage. Mlle. Ilma di Murska, his associate, has never produced a more marked, or a more legitimate effect than in the character of Senta—“*das Weib der Zukunft*,” as Herr Wagner himself calls her, in the *Mittheilung an seine Freunde*, the preface to the book already cited. These two were absolutely irreproachable, and their united efforts contributed more than anything else to the triumph of *L'Olandese Dannato*. We cannot enter into details; but let us express a hope that next season should there again be two Italian houses, which, as Mr. Gye and Mr. Mapleson have dissolved partnership, is not unlikely, a fairer chance may be vouchsafed to the musical public of appreciating this, the best of Herr Wagner's contributions to the lyric stage—an opera which, compared with *Tristan* and its successors, is as harmony to chaos.

A miscellaneous entertainment, for the benefit of Mlle. Nilsson, brought the Drury Lane performances to an end. Much has been done since the 16th of April, when the theatre opened; but the production of *Mignon* and *L'Olandese Dannato* alone suffice to stamp the first season of the new management as exceptional. That the opera of M. Thomas should have drawn money, while Herr Wagner's opera did nothing of the kind, involves a question which may be discussed on some future occasion.

A POLONAISE BY CHOPIN.

So rarely does a musical thought gain, by a change of the language in which it is transmitted, that when an exception is met with, it may be worth noticing.

Most pianists, it is to be hoped, now that the Polonaises by Chopin,—of their kind, an incomparable and original as his Mazurkas—and among the most picturesque and characteristic piano-forte music in existence. One or two of them, however, may be cited as almost impossible to be performed, so as to work out the conception of the author, which includes gorgeous pomposity of sound, as well as dignity of idea. The Polonaise in A major is of the number. Even when given by the accomplished hands of the greatest pianists, and the most penetrated by the character of the music, it must disappoint the ear, because keys and strings and fingers are limited in their power of expression. I have heard it again and again—always with the same result. This short-coming suggested the idea of arranging it for a band of “harmony music” (to use the German phrase). The suggestion was carried out the other evening by the excellent conductor of the music at Scarborough—Herr Meyer Lutz,—and the result was as magnificent and inspiring as that of the “Torch Dance” of Meyerbeer to be heard here, concerning which a paragraph will be found in a former number of the *Athenaeum*. Indeed, Chopin's “Polonaise,” because simpler and nobler in its phrases, produces the greater effect of the two,—even under the disadvantage of its being an arrangement; whereas Meyerbeer's was calculated for the instruments which perform it, and if represented on the piano would lose no small part of its stately brilliancy. I have never heard a more superb piece of pageant music nor one more fitted for the most magnificent locality—or for the largest assemblage of instruments, be it as overpowering as that which Herr Wiprecht, of Berlin, brought together for the memorable serenade at the Brühl Palace, near Bonn, given when our Queen entered the Rhineland, for the Beethoven Festival. As an exception I repeat, which proves an established rule—the effect of this splendid piece of music will not soon be forgotten by any who have “ears to hear.”

Scarborough, August, 1870.

HENRY F. CHORLEY.

THE DRAMA IN SPAIN.

The intensely local character of the Spanish stage in its best days has given posterity so clear an insight into the life of the period, that its decadence must ever remain matter for regret. The Spanish stage of to-day, somewhat like our own, is fed by importations from Paris: occasionally originality finds an audience, but an attempt by one of that school of dramatists who maintain that Julius Caesar in his toga was, after all, a human being, has proved a failure; not from want of merit in the author, but because the Potts and Slurks of a Spanish Estanwill have damned it utterly.

A curious scene, or rather an unmistakable row, has lately occurred in the Theatre of Lope de Rueda, at Madrid. On the introduction of a comedy called *La Carmanola*, depicting, in the author's idea, the press life of the hour, he seems to have dispensed with those set appliances which make up the fun of a Spanish comedy,—the comic man—the triangle of cupboards, where somebody is always hiding from somebody else—where nobody over-hears a word, although everybody is within ear-shot; no tables were upset, or hats crushed, for the amusement of the gallery;—in fact, none of the ordinary aids to success were used. The author essayed a realistic “dress suit” comedy, and the press, not relishing its satire, while they deny its truth, have condemned it. *La Carmanola*, having been produced at a time of great political excitement, created a sensation which should have brought profit to both author and manager.

La Carmanola had already been before the public some months; the author published it last year, but suppressed his name, and adopted that of “A Wit of this Court.” His preface is as follows:—“This comedy is printed without having been represented at any theatre. The reason of this will be plain to the reader taking into consideration the times and circumstances of the hour; but if now, or at any future time, a manager should desire to represent it, it is hardly necessary to say that the author will not object.” So much for the printed comedy. Of the acting one, the author, the manager, the Carlist press, the radically liberal press, and the outside public, those who paid to hear it and did not, are only competent to speak. The second representation has not taken place; the more sober Madrileno is, therefore, precluded from taking part in this misunderstanding. The first scene set is an editor's room: a round table, of gigantic dimensions, covered with inkstands, pens, &c.; piles of periodicals fill the centre of the stage; authors writing, others scissors-and-pasting, &c.; the walls, according to stage directions, are covered with ink-splashed announcements and pictorial representations, but not of saints; broken or rickety stools fill in the foreground. In this den sits supreme the director of *La Carmanola*: the author has chosen that the journal he seeks to immortalize shall be of the scurrilous and scissors-and-paste school. The editors are rather black sheep. One has brought nothing away with him from Salamanca but slang songs and a recipe for salad. He has been superseded in an official capacity, and thinks it capital fun to turn editor, finding the occupation profitable. Another has written bad comedies by the dozen, which no manager will accept, and spends five hours daily in writing about everything, understanding nothing.

Don Rafael, the director, whom the author leads you to believe is to be the villain, but who turns out in the end to be all virtue and abnegation, feeds his small vanities by printing constant eulogisms upon himself. Eduardo, an assistant, whom Don Rafael is supposed to have perverted, and who, forgetting the lessons of virtue and abnegation taught by his parents, pens and publishes a scurrilous article vilifying a most respectable gentleman and the wife of his friend. Eduardo has not the slightest knowledge of the individuals calumniated; has overrun the constable, and a money-lender becomes troublesome; Don Rafael finds the money, and Eduardo the brains for the article. Presently Don Rafael desires to be introduced to Eduardo's parents, and becomes enamoured of his sister, who, he has heard, has been visiting the sick during the cholera epidemic. When Eduardo returns home, his father, Don Antonio, is furious; the lady calumniated is his wife, and of course Eduardo's mother. Don Antonio is determined to have judicious, not judicial satisfaction: he will not fight a duel because he may get the worst of it; so he determines to call on the director, and, “six-shooter” in hand, compel him to write, print, and publish a refutation. Don Rafael refuses to name the author or retract, and induces Don Antonio to withdraw, pocketing his six-shooter: and so ends the first act. The second is set in the house of Don Antonio. Don Rafael presents himself as a suitor for the hand of his daughter, Eduardo's sister. Don Antonio, ashamed of his choleric course of action, turns his choler upon his wife and his old friend, Don Manuel, who, it now turns out, went together in a hackney-carriage to secure the overdue acceptances of Eduardo. Don Rafael recognizes in the father of his *amante* the gentleman who violently assaulted and threatened to shoot him in his editorial capacity: Maria discovers her would-be lover to be the monster of iniquity vituperated by her parents. Eduardo now finds that he has vilified his own mother and his own and his father's best friend, on the occasion of their seeking to become possessed of the overdue documents. They strike—picturesque attitudes; and so closes the second act. In the third, Eduardo, to facilitate the *dénouement*, attempts suicide. Don Rafael prevents it. The latter decides to hand over to Don Manuel the directorship of *La Carmanola*, as a set-off against the vilification. Don Manuel accepts the post, although he does not think much of journalism in general, and less of

journalists in particular. He moralizes thus upon military matters:—“It appears to me undesirable that rogues should parade the streets armed with muskets, while honest people go about their business unarmed”—a sarcasm on the volunteers of liberty. Don Antonio at last becomes reasonable, pardons his son, offers his friendship to Don Rafael, seeks forgiveness of his wife and his friend, Don Manuel; and thus ends the play. “We can hardly forgive the author (says Señor Cos-Gayón, from whose article in the *Revista de España* we quote), who, desiring to present a type of rectitude and good sense, makes Don Antonio from first to last act as a madman or a fool.”

This is the outline of a comedy which set all the press of Madrid in motion, and brought the Potts and Slurks to the Lope de Rueda to applaud or hiss. The little preface, and the other means taken to call public attention to the production of *La Carmanola*, led up to this *dénouement*. “What was the author's object in vexing the press? No doubt journalists commit errors, are like other men mortal, and if an author chooses to burlesque a profession, why not? If the play was slow, the dialogue was chaste and elegant. Nothing can discredit journalism: those who abuse it are like dogs who bark at the moon. Still, if the dogs who bay heavenward cannot stop the motion of a star, they may annoy the neighbourhood. *La Carmanola* will not stay journalism; but after the manner which was decided upon of announcing and discussing it the result was not doubtful. The press on this has shown itself to be the enemy of the press; for any scenic representation which shall rival the unwholesome food of the *café chantant* should not only be tolerated, but applauded. Señor Nocedal's sin is, that he has burlesqued the press. His comedy is a caricature, but it offends neither in word nor deed, as too many others have offended, and do offend, the eyes, ears, and consciences of decent people. The press is, indeed, weak, if it admits of no other solution but violence and disorder when it is clumsily burlesqued, as in *La Carmanola*.

F. W. C.

Song of the Day.*

Tramp, tramp, tramp!
With sabre and with gun,
To glory on the battle-field
The warrior hosts march on.
Tramp, tramp, tramp!
And still they onward go,
To fight for country, wife, and child,
And crush the daring foe.
Ah! why is it that thus,
For kings' ambitious greed,
So many loving, gallant hearts,
Should in the struggle bleed?

But, tramp, tramp, tramp! &c.

Tramp, tramp, tramp!
With trumpet, fife, and drum,
With flag and banner waving high,
The cry is “still they come!”
Tramp, tramp, tramp!
With cymbal's clashing sound,
On, on they march to victory,
Or death upon the ground.
And yet, oh Lord, how sad!
For kings and kaisers show,
That man with man should madly fight,
And blood in torrents flow.

But, tramp, tramp, tramp! &c.

Tramp, tramp, tramp!
In rank and serried file,
Let's pray that such may never be
In this our happy Isle.
Tramp, tramp, tramp!
But should o'er danger show,
Then Britons all with one accord,
Would rise and beat their foe.
Yet, Lord, protect our land
From all such horrid strife,
We war not—tho' we fear not—
And in peace would pass our life.

Tramp, tramp, tramp! &c.

August 10, 1870.

LOUIS EMANUEL.

[We recommend these verses to the careful consideration of Mr. Charles Braham, who set to music Oxenford's renowned song of “Havelock.”—A. S. S.]

* Copyright.

ON ECHOMETRY.

To the Editor of the "Musical World."

Sir.—You complain that I have set forth facts as to classical music being considered too weary for many people. It was not my own sentiment, therefore, in stating it, my responsibility ceases if I can make good my facts. Nor am I the first or only one who has noticed that such is frequently the case. The last time I was present at two great performances, I noticed especially that many people went away before the *finale* had begun. In one instance some Royal visitors took their departure: there followed, of course, quite an exodus. The two pieces escaped from on these two occasions were the Choral Symphony, and the Septet in E flat, both by Beethoven, each lasting about an hour. As I was never present when either of these works were performed previously, I can of course only speak from my impressions caused by what actually occurred. Heaven forfend the time when gasconading should become so much the rule that to record facts should be deemed "idiotic." Let us look the facts steadily in the face. Pray do not for one moment imagine that I can have any sentiment save such as can be comprehended in the word "reverence" for standard classical works, nor that I can treat the honestly-conceived and faithfully-expressed opinions of any worthy man otherwise than with sincere respect. I say unhesitatingly that our classical works are too few. If an individual has heard, for instance, a symphony of, say, Mozart's, one hundred times over (and very many have heard *all* the good symphonies one hundred times over), is his judgment to be deprecated because he asks for a change of diet? Two of the best men of the century possessed such good musical memory that the first bar of most sterling pieces was enough for them—memory supplied the remainder. This is, of all things else, the essential first quality of an original mind, in music, as in other matters. Perfect satisfaction with "things as they are," never yet gave the primary impetus to statesman, philosopher, or artist. If his "ideal" be not in advance of the actual, there is an end to progress. The first essential experience, then, of the musician comprises a memory of *all* the good that has been achieved before him, and a certain dissatisfaction with what is fast arising from a perception within his own mind of more beautiful ideas yet to be embodied. Were every artist to conclude that the best had been done art would die. So, if a musician, possessed with one of these "iron memories" (such men are to be found in every age), were invited to sit out for an hour a classic work already heard many times and clearly remembered, would it be a matter of wonder if he ventured to enquire for "change of air?" I think not. The wonder would be if he did not desire a change? What would be said if the Royal Academy Exhibition opened every year with but *two* new pictures; all the others newly exhibited having been on the walls for a generation at least? That is just the aspect of affairs in music. *All* the symphonies, except about *two* each season, have been (the very youngest of them), heard over and over, again and again, for forty years a perfect ritual and rubric of symphonies and overtures. And then the impudence of the public (who are willing to pay their guinea a seat) asking for "change of air?" "I never go to the play now," replied an elderly friend, whom I had asked if he was going to see *Macbeth*; "I saw Mrs. Siddons once, Sir, and I don't want to have my recollection disturbed." Can it be looked upon as strange that after hearing an artist, who, perhaps, stands alone, render choice classical work, that a true lover of music, with even but a *fair* memory should dread an infinitely inferior reproduction of the *same* work by some unknown Brown, Jones, or Robinson. Smith may have made a very good copy of a Raphael; but is one to be blamed for preferring the original, and desiring not to have his recollection disturbed respecting it?

So much for controversial gossip. I will offend no more by wordiness. One object I have distinctly in view in treating of the "duration of notes," is to assert that, "What we gain in speed we lose in volume." If in one part there are four notes and in another but one, other things being equal, the part having the four notes will be much weaker than the part having but one note. Perhaps but a fourth part of the power will be manifested by the short notes: some would think this too much difference. Something depends upon speed (as to both), but yet I do not think the proportion excessive. Put eight notes in one part against one in another, and you will have but one-eighth of the power. Sixteen, or thirty-two, and a band of that number of very rapid notes (say if the passage be in violins) be reduced in power to the volume of one note drawn by Joachim. If it is thought I am over-stating the facts, let those who doubt recall their experience. The stridulous sound of the bows of thirty violins, when playing a rapid passage, is a material increase of their united small volume of actual noise; but even with this accretion, I feel that I am safely within the bounds of fact in stating that a solo violinist produces more in one long note than the thirty in thirty quick notes. However, I make the suggestion for those who care to think about such matters, without in any way vouching for mathematical correctness as to quantity. If what I have

said sets any one enquiring, that is all I can wish or hope. Next, the rapid notes fail from the impossibility of all the atoms of atmospheric air in any apartment being, as a whole, so quietly set in motion as to become all *media* for the production and conveyance to the ear of the same harmony. (I am really very anxious not to be wordy, and with this remark I will cease altogether. My conscience will, upon this score at least, then be easy.) Just as a small flute can be quicker sounded than a large organ-pipe, so a small room quicker resounds than an expansive hall. The room should be imagined as one vast "organ-pipe." In large assemblies, therefore, the music that would reach all must be spread out broadly. The better the building is for sound, the more necessary should this conception be realized. If a large cathedral, small notes—pretty to those near—will be altogether lost to those at a distance. Illustrations of these fundamental principles so crowd upon me that I know not which to select, and I know that the briefer I am the better you will love me. Suppose, then, the rapid passages on the violin reached one hundred feet, the passages half as rapid, twice that distance; the slow ones, without any exaggeration, will reach the ear at half-a-mile. These considerations should guide conductors a little—composers a great deal. If a passage occurs—some of Handel's great cadences illustrate this—where the chorus in one part have a holding note for four or more slow bars, by the time the fourth bar is reached, if in such a place as Exeter Hall or the Crystal Palace, that note (like the old prophet's rod) will have swallowed up all its contemporaries. So that at certain points the conductor would do well to consider from such a basis as this:—If it takes the hundredth part of a minute to elapse betwixt opening the valve and the full discharge of sound from a sixty-four feet organ-pipe—(I think it will take more)—what period is required for the perfect reverberation of a space so many times larger than the guage mentioned? Until such a calculation enters into the mind, in some sort, of the musical director or composer, his conceptions, in proportion to the extent of his orchestra, or the grandeur of the music before him, must fall short of their possible result. In the *chorale* this is of the first importance. Conductors who overlook this are constantly urging their choirs to a speed that entirely destroys the music. If, in striking at the root of what I believe to be an evil, I have expressed myself too strongly, forgive me. If my statements are incorrect, no one would be more pleased than myself to have them controverted. Far beyond this very slight statement of the case the difficulty extends, in fact, to the very heart of *all* music, or indeed I should not go thus far out of my way to risk the disapprobation of many estimable people in making known these sentiments. You cannot move a "division" as you would a "light brigade." What is "echelon" but a suggestion that "full points" are necessary? How gratefully do we hail a bar's rest in grand choral music, that we may hear the "echo." Above all, let the young writer trace in Handel (none other knew the elements of the principle) how he keeps one slow subject, such as "I will sing," in *Israel*, or "For the Lord," in the "Hallelujah," always going. He gives his notes "time to speak." And yet he is by no means dull, because he has the counterpoint all the time, both lovely and lively.—Yours very truly,

August 12th, 1870.

IDEALIZER.

D. STEWART'S NEW ODE.

(From the "Birmingham Daily Post.")

By way of overture to the day's proceedings the orchestral parts of Dr. Stewart's *Ode to Shakspeare* were again tried over, under the direction of the composer, but as the result showed, the precaution was superfluous, and the band had practically nothing either to learn or unlearn. Further experience of Dr. Stewart's music serves only to confirm the favourable impression we have already expressed of it. So far, at all events, as concerns the instrumental score, it must be pronounced an exceedingly creditable piece of work—broad, rhythmical, well-balanced, and spirited. If the ideas do not quite rise to the level of the subject—we do not speak of the text—it is, perhaps, because the subject is, intellectually considered, beyond the reach of musical art. Handel or Beethoven might doubtless have formed an adequate conception of the sublimity of Shakspeare's genius, but even they must have failed to realize its many-sidedness. Dr. Stewart has not apparently aimed at exemplifying or delineating the genius of the immortal bard. He has been content to extol it, and this, judging from the instrumental portion of the work, he has accomplished in a highly satisfactory manner. If there be a fault to find with the orchestration, it is that it lacks the relief which a judicious economy of power would impart. It is of a too uniform strength and consistence throughout, and in many places, therefore, greatly over-weights the voice parts, especially in the solo passages. The ideas, though neither very profound nor very original, are often ingenious and always pleasing, while their treatment, as already intimated, leaves little or nothing to be desired.

The Choir Benevolent Fund is to hold a Festival Service at Lincoln Cathedral on the 27th proximo.

THE LATE JOHN COOPER.

Somebody should give us a sketch of John Cooper. He was a type of the conventional actor, but he was a very good actor, minded his business conscientiously, and always did all that he knew. Jacopo was his name in a Drury Lane adaptation of the American Mr. Cooper's *Bravo* (I think that was the novel, and that the drama, which was musical, was called *The Red Mask*), and on the first night Mr. Cooper knelt at the block and was duly beheaded. But audiences had not then learned to love the horrific, and the Drury Lane people made such a terrible disturbance about the execution of their favourite—like the “Cornish Boys” when Bishop Trelawny was in danger—that on the next night, as the death procession was crossing the grand square, a white handkerchief flew out at a window, and the chorus exultingly struck up—

“Doubt is over; see, of mercy
Yonder waves the happy sign.”

Many who read this will remember Cooper as the Prince in that splendid spectacle and very effective drama, *The Jewess*, which has never been beaten except by some of the Covent Garden Meyerbeer representations. He had behaved ill to the heroine (exquisitely played by the lady who was then Miss Ellen Tree), and she went in search of him, and fell exhausted at the door of the palace, in an attitude which still dwells on one's eye, just as does that other wonderful bit of silent effect, Charles Kemble's “stroll into Angiers with indolent grace.” But I am told that Cooper's Othello had singular merit. I should have thought him a good deal over-parted there; but I have heard the reverse from men who went to theatres when there were great actors. His Cassio was exceedingly good—the remorse of a genteel kind of person who had had the misfortune to get drunk, and who thought the world was therefore at an end, was just, I think, what we wanted. You did not feel in the least with the donkey; but Cooper made him manly enough at the end, and said, “Dear General, I never gave you cause,” in a tone that I remember after twenty years. At one time no Drury Lane play in which he did not appear seemed complete; and the *Times* expressed what we all felt when it called him “our friend.” He has helped me through many a pleasant evening; I am very glad that his own evening was pleasant.

SHIRLEY BROOKS.

THE OLD STORY OVER AGAIN.

That master of humour; that wondrous pen-and-ink photographer of men (under which head are included women), and manners, Augustus Mayhew, once gave a highly amusing exemplification of Virgil's celebrated lines:

“Fama, malum quo non aliud velocius ullum;
Mobilitate viget, viresque acquirit eundo,” etc.

drawing the said exemplification from the apparently harmless fact that a worthy and respected family once lived in a London “Row,” or “Crescent,” and asked some friends to stop with them for a few days. The result of their hospitality was that tradesman after tradesman first ceased to call for orders, and then refused to serve them any longer; that the Water Works requested immediate payment of “those arrears;” that the Gas Company threatened to cut off the supply; and that their neighbours looked on them with an evil eye—or, rather, with as many evil eyes as they possessed eyes among them—and were evidently not particularly proud of their acquaintance. And what was the cause of this series of annoyances, loss of credit, and eventually almost ruin, which overtook this luckless family? Their visitors' name happened to be Sheriff! “Mr. and Mrs. Sheriff are stopping at No. 20,” says No. 1 in the Row to No. 2. “The Sheriffs are at No. 20,” says No. 2 to No. 3. “No. 20 is done up; the sheriffs are in the house,” says No. 3 to No. 4. The reader may easily imagine with what keen satire and rollicking humour the story is carried out by Augustus Mayhew. A somewhat similar specimen of the mode in which facts may be distorted has just occurred in relation to M. Offenbach. A great many leading papers of Germany announced that M. Offenbach, a born German, being a native of Cologne, “had not blushed to compose, on the outbreak of the war, a hymn entitled, ‘Dieu garde l'Empereur,’ thus playing the traitor to his country,” and much more to the same effect. The *Vossische Zeitung*, which was one of the said papers, contained, however, the following notice in its issue for the 6th inst.:—“Out of respect for the German name, we expressed, in our Parisian correspondence of yesterday, our doubts about the report that the well-known composer, Jacob Offenbach, had composed a new French war-song, ‘Dieu garde

l'Empereur.’ As we expected, the refutation follows quickly on the heels of the charge. We beg to-day to call attention to the fact that the composition in question dates from the year 1862 (as is proved by a catalogue of the publisher's), and was placed among the novelties of the day by being advertised afresh at the present moment.”—“The sheriffs are in at No. 20!”—“Lor! are they though? Well, I never did think much of that lot!” These are not your words, Augustus Mayhew, but they are what you have proved beyond a doubt some one in the “Row” must have said to some one else.

THE LAST OF THE “MASTER-SINGERS.”

“Master-song” (“Meistersgesang”) survived, at Ulm, the horrors of the wars of the first French Revolution. As late as 1830, there were, in that city, twelve old “Singmasters,” who, after being expelled from their “Schauslube,” or “Show-room,” in the Town Hall, as well as from many other localities belonging to the Corporation, used to meet in the inns and lodging-houses frequented by artizans, and there sing their old tunes, without printed music or words, but simply from memory, so that it was quite incomprehensible how the artificial verses and the still more artificial melodies could have been preserved so long by mere tradition. In the year 1839, there were four of these old men still left. They represented the crafts of the gunsmiths, the locksmiths, the “Werkmeister,” and the “Kronmeister.” On the 21st October, 1839, they solemnly closed the old Mastersong, formally handing over to the Ulm Liederkrantz their song-books, books of notes, school-boards, &c., &c., with a prayer that “Just as the tablet of the Mastersingers had for centuries invited their pious forefathers to listen to their songs, the banners of the Liederkrantz might wave for centuries to come, and its songs be heard by a remote posterity.” A few years after the dissolution of the guild, there was only one Mastersinger remaining, a linen weaver, of the name of Haberle. He was not averse to strong drinks, and his business was not as flourishing as he could have desired—and did desire, by the way. In order to ameliorate his circumstances, from a pecuniary point of view, he made up his mind, without more ado, to become town watchman. He possessed a good strong pair of lungs, and the musical education requisite for the post to which he aspired and which he obtained. His humour and facetious remarks caused him to be a welcome visitor at the wine shops and inns, and many a glass of liquor did he earn by his jokes and his singing. If ever he took a little too much, he used to jump on the table, and begin, with all his might and main, the old Mastersingers' strains, interpolating many a full-flavoured joke, and finally dropping into the usual watchman's cry. If, however, anyone indulged in the insulting quotation:

“Die Leinweber haben eine herrliche Zunft,
Titscharum, Titscharum, Titscharum,
Am Galgen ist ihre zu Zusammenkunft,
Titscharum, Titscharum, Titschum!” *

he would boil over with rage, resembling in appearance a perfect maniac, and swearing like an entire regiment of troopers. He would jump off the table, gulp down a glass of beer, seize his tremendous halberd, and rush out. Then would be heard the melancholy sound of his watchman's cry, growing gradually fainter and fainter:

“Hört, Ihr Herrn, und lasst Euch sagen,
Die Glock had elf geschlagen.” †

And with this cry, the respectable old songs of the German Mastersingers died out. The *Minnesang* had stepped down six hundred years previously from the the proud princely castle and into the workshop of honest burghers, where it grew so coarse and ossified as to be no longer recognizable. It disappeared from the world on the lips of a watchman.

* “The linen-weavers boast a fine craft, do you see,
Tisharum, Tisharum, Tisharum!
They'll all hang some day on the tall gallows tree,
Tisharum, Tisharum, Tishum!”

The sarcasm in these lines does not certainly strike a dispassionate person as excruciatingly severe, still, if he be impartial as well as dispassionate, he will frankly confess that it is quite as scathing as that lurking beneath the question: “Who eat the puppy pie under Marlowe Bridge?” a question in itself apparently harmless, not to say, stupid, but which, nevertheless, will lash into foaming fury any Thames Bargee to whom it is addressed.

† The above German doggerel may be thus rendered in the subjoined English doggerel:

“Tis eleven you've just heard;
That's the time, upon my word.”

DEATH.

On the 12th inst., EMMA MARY, the eldest daughter of FREDERICK KINGSBURY, of 18, Cecil Street, Strand, aged 23 years—deeply mourned.

NOTICE.

To ADVERTISERS.—*The Office of the MUSICAL WORLD is at Messrs. DUNCAN DAVISON & Co.'s, 244, Regent Street, corner of Little Argyll Street (First Floor). It is requested that Advertisements may be sent not later than Thursday. Payment on delivery.*

The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 20, 1870.

MUSIC AND WAR.

THE connection of Music and War is one of very old date, but no advance of time seems to loosen the chain that binds together these apparently uncongenial allies. What the one was to the other when Joshua's trumpets blared round the walls of Jericho, so it is now, as Frenchman and German commit musical slaughter on the plains of Champagne. It might even be said with truth that at no period did music play a more important part in this connection than at present. Napoleon let slip the "Marseillaise" as though it were one of his most trusty dogs of war; and ever since the "Marseillaise" has raged up and down France with the effect of the Fiery Cross upon a Highland clan. King William had no need to let slip anything upon his people, because, always addicted to shouting themselves hoarse about their river god—the Rhine—the Germans had only to shout themselves quite hoarse to be equal to the occasion. So, from the one side come the determined phrases of "The Rhine Watch," and "Where is the German's Fatherland?" answering to the passionate strains of Rouget de l'Isle's hymn; and "Mourir pour la Patrie" from the other. With these notes upon their tongue, and ringing in their ear even above the din of battle, many a sturdy Teuton and daring Gaul die, as their fathers died before them. We, who love a beautiful art for its own sake, may regret to see it thus prostituted, and made the machinery for unscrupulous monarchs, and still more unscrupulous ministers, to work out their vile designs. We may sorrowfully look on as the power of music over men's passions is used to stir them up to mutual hatred and a common bloodthirstiness; but we cannot deny that the machinery is obvious, and the power great. Neither can we deny that the homage thus paid to the influence of music and song is the greatest it is possible to conceive. At times like the present we see, as at no other, what a mighty spell the art exercises over the minds and resolves of men. We can understand why great emperors have trembled at the sound of a people's hymn; and why, when it suits their purpose, they can bid it ring from frontier to frontier. The oft-quoted saying of a nameless philosopher—"Let me make the nation's songs, and I care not who makes the laws"—is no exaggeration, depend upon it; but rather one of those profound truths which, always visible to some, are seen by the many only when convulsions throw them on the surface. Out of a lamentable prostitution of art, therefore, some crumbs of comfort may be gathered; especially may he whose business it is to create or interpret the people's songs learn to magnify his office and measure his responsibility. As is the power exercised, so is both the importance and accountableness. That the power may be beyond measure, the spirit of Rouget de l'Isle, supposing it able to take note of passing events, can testify.

The tendency of war to enlist on its behalf every possible auxiliary is proverbial; and when the religion of peace and love is made to do duty in both the opposing ranks, music can hardly expect to escape. We have seen within the last few weeks an Emperor and a King declaring, with hands upon each other's throats, that the God of Battles is on their side, and invoking His aid with a pious unction many a Dissenting parson might envy. We have seen the King (the Emperor seems to have thought a like act superfluous) order his people on their knees to pray for victory; and we have seen the King (the Emperor has not had the chance) returning thanks for victory as though the Lord had fought against the French as He did against the Canaanites of old. This is very pitiful; but the mention of it may serve to show what an all-absorbing demon is War, and how the noblest and purest things are not safe from its blood-stained hands. There is need for patience, while we listen to those instinctive utterances from our inner nature, which speak of the halcyon time when the nations shall learn war no more; and Art and Religion—twin sisters of equal loveliness—may walk as unmolested as did Una under the protection of her chastity.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

WE have heard the story of the man who offered a reward to be informed of the most extraordinary profession, and gave the prize to a poet who lived by his profession. The profession of a poet nowadays is not such a bad one—if we may judge by the balance-sheet which M. Victor Hugo, with that modesty which distinguishes him, has published in a French paper. "I am possessed," writes the author of the *Legende des Siècles*—

	Yearly.
In Belgium, of 300 shares in the National Bank, producing about.....	£1,360
In England, £17,000 of Consols, producing annually	500
In France, from the Institute.....	40
In Guernsey, Hauteville House	40

Total £1,940

M. Victor Hugo adds that his property in his works is disposed of for years to come; that he pays over to his children £1,200 a year, and lives himself on £500. To this should be added the *droits d'auteur* from the theatres of France and Belgium—a considerable source of revenue, no obstacles being now placed by the French Government in the way of M. Victor Hugo's pieces. Even *Le Roi s'amuse*, prohibited under Louis Philippe, has been performed at Nantes. A part of M. Victor Hugo's fortune is placed in the country which, in *L'Homme qui Rit*, he has so ridiculously misrepresented.

IF the accident at the Alhambra leads to any improvement it should extend to the clothing, or, rather, underclothing, of the dancers. It would be presumptuous to question the taste of the present day. We might point out that the ballets at the Alhambra are not exactly like the ballets in which Taglioni, Duvernay, and Carlotta Grisi were wont to perform. The world has made a considerable advance of late in appreciation of art, and there is little doubt that the present generation, which applauds the contortions of half-naked women in Leicester Square, is a vast improvement on our ancestors who only patronized the legitimate drama. Still there is something wanting at the Alhambra, and that is—clothes.

DRESDEN.—Herr R. Wagner's *Meistersinger* has been revived, with new scenery, dresses, and decorations, the first ones having been destroyed at the burning down of the Operahouse. Judicious "cuts" have been made in the long-winded score. The author-composer is extremely indignant at this, but the management has taken no notice of his displeasure.—Nothing definite is yet known concerning the erection of the new Theatre. The old building was insured in the Madgeburg Insurance Company, for a sum of 120,000 thalers. This sum the Company refused to pay, for reasons which they, no doubt, deemed valid, and the matter was referred to the legal authorities. Unfortunately for the Company, the latter took a different view of the reasons aforesaid, and the Company had, therefore, to pay.

CRYSTAL PALACE.

August, the great excursion month, has already brought large numbers of visitors. The three last fireworks evenings alone have attracted between 60,000 and 70,000 persons. The next display has been postponed a little longer than usual, in order that a great representation of the blowing up the railway bridge over the Rhine connecting Kehl with Strasburg may be prepared. Considering the interest taken in all matters connected with the present lamentable war, it is thought that such a representation will possess special attraction.

The mammoth shells displayed by Mr. Brock on the last occasions were of great splendour. Some of them were twelve inches in diameter; and, bursting into thousands of stars of all colours, their effect was surprisingly beautiful. The two greatest gatherings in August have hitherto been the Foresters and Temperance League Fêtes, each attracting between fifty and sixty thousand people. The Foresters' Day this year was on the 16th, and the Temperance League Fête will be held on the 30th. Balloon ascents, ballad operas, processions, and great fountains, are attractions common to each. In addition to these the Temperance League gives a choral concert of 5,000 children, and holds meetings in the grounds on behalf of its cause. A new Fête has this year been organized which will doubtless compete with the two last-named bodies for high numbers. It is in aid of the Metropolitan Police Orphanage. Amusements will be provided to last throughout the day. Nineteen police bands will compete for prizes, and there will be cricket and other matches in which members of the force will take part. The grounds now look very beautiful, the recent rain having freshened them considerably. The flower beds on terrace and round the rosary never looked more gorgeous.

MR. JOHN COOPER.

This name, once so familiar to old playgoers, has appeared not in a play-bill, but in the obituary. John Cooper died, last week, at Tunbridge Wells, aged seventy-seven. He may be said to have been the last actor of the Kemble school, which, no doubt, was what Mrs. Crawford called it, a "a paw and pause school," but which had one merit, in the clear and distinct enunciation even of words (like *tejious* for tedious, *Room for Rome*, *swrin* for sovereign, &c.) which were excruciatingly mispronounced. John Kemble recognized young Cooper's adhesion to his school, by presenting him with a sword, as a testimony of the old actor's admiration of the young player's Romeo. That young player came from Bath to the Haymarket, in 1811, at which time he was but eighteen years of age. He made his *début* as Count Montalban, in *The Honeymoon* (Elliston was the Duke Aranza). Cooper soon withdrew, to make himself more practised, if not more perfect, by a course of provincial stages. He chiefly distinguished himself at Liverpool, whence his old colleague, Elliston, invited him to Drury Lane, where, in 1820, he made his first appearance as Romeo to the Juliet of his cousin, Mrs. W. West. From that time till Charles Kean left the Princess's a few years ago, Cooper was constantly before the public, playing everything, from Shakespearian heroes to rattling gentlemen in farces and in later years the heavier personages generally. He played everything well, without showing any brilliancy of genius, but he had sound common sense, carefulness, and was in every respect a conscientious actor. He was one of the many players of the second order whose industry and thriftness begat riches. John Cooper might have sung "My banks are well-furnished." But we chiefly notice this highly-respectable player, to contrast the labour which the performers of his time had to undergo, with the luxurious ease enjoyed by actors now. In our days, pieces run for hundreds of nights, and the player has no new study during the whole of that time. Some actors have but two or three characters in their *répertoire*, and these are played till the public are wearied. It was different in Cooper's time. Take for instance his first season at Drury Lane. During that season Cooper played three dozen different parts. He appeared in nine or ten characters, in old plays, for the first time; and he was the original representative, that season, of twelve parts in new pieces, some of which were five-act plays. Work like this would make the young staggers of to-day go mad. The Dolittles of this age have no conception how their grandfathers in the drama laboured. Among the varied characters which Cooper created in his first year at Drury Lane, were the Doge in Byron's *Marino Faliero*, and Tom King in *Monsieur Tonson*; Geraldi Duval, in the piece so-called, and Mr. Nicodemus in *The Spectre Bridegroom*. He also played Captain Smith to Mrs. W. West's Pocahontas in a melo-drama by Barker, which was first played in Philadelphia, in 1808, under the title of *The Indian Princess, or La Belle Sauvage*. At Drury it was called *Pocahontas, or the Indian Princess*. In this piece, the Indian Opecharuanough was acted by Booth, the father of the man who shot President Lincoln. We have only to add, that Mr. Cooper's home was at Ealing, where he was much respected. The figure of the upright, gentlemanlike, old player walking sedately cheerful, to or from Ealing Church, will be missed with much regret by those among whom he lived in that pleasant village.

The death, at Pilnitz, of Madame Bender, for whom Weber composed *Preciosa*, is announced.

PROVINCIAL.

The *Carmarthen Journal* of August 12th has the following:—

"The inhabitants of Cross Hands, a colliery district about 12 miles from Carmarthen, have a resident amongst them in Dr. Norton, of Nantglas (Norton Brothers, proprietors of the Cross Hands Colliery), who spares no trouble nor expense in getting up yearly a concert of vocal and instrumental music in aid of the School-Church, which has but a short time since been erected at Cross Hands for the spiritual benefit of the mass of colliers and their families, who inhabit the neighbourhood. On this occasion, the 31st ult., a most efficient company of amateurs gave their services, and Herr Hauptmann, of Cheltenham (late of Tenby), the celebrated violinist, so well known in Carmarthen, being on a visit to Dr. Norton, also lent his powerful aid, and enraptured a large audience by his extraordinary and impressive playing, which comprised De Beriot's first *Air Varie*, charmingly accompanied by Mrs. Higginson, another on popular airs from *Lucia*, and the ever popular 'Yankee Doodle,' which he gave as an encore after a most vociferous demand."

DR. SPARK ACROSS THE LEEDS ORGAN.

To the Editor of the "Musical World."

SIR,—I have just returned to Leeds from the Continent, and find the organ controversy still going on. I wish to say, with reference to the very sensible letter of the Rev. Henry Greeves, of Selby, in your issue of July 2nd, with which I entirely agree in all respects, that I think it only right to explain that those commendations of the Leeds Town Hall organ which originated with the Corporation authorities, and which he might think unjustifiable, were, in my opinion, rendered absolutely necessary by the long course of malicious attacks made upon this instrument, without the slightest semblance to art criticism, obviously from interested personal motives, and which we better be to really operating to prevent people from coming to hear the organ for themselves.

I am glad to say this necessity has now disappeared, and with it the remedy we thought it desirable to apply. The Leeds organ can speak for itself to all who listen with unprejudiced ears, and, for my part, I wish nothing better for it than that all who take real interest in the matter should thoroughly hear and examine for themselves, and they would soon be able to discover how far the statements of which I have complained are founded on truth.—Faithfully yours,

Leeds, 3rd August, 1870.

W.M. SPARK.

THE ORGAN CONTROVERSY.

To the Editor of the "Musical World."

DEAR SIR,—After perusal, by the kind permission of my captors, of the straightforward and very comprehensive account of the organ in the Leeds Town Hall, given in your number of this date, and in order that there may be no further dispute as to which is the largest organ in the world, pipes, accessories, and all included, and granting that a stopped diapason bass, and a stopped diapason treble, constitute two *draw stops*, I beg you will notify to your multitudinous subscribers that in addition to the data given regarding the organ in question, this fact, an important one, must be taken into account when comparing it with the much-vaunted Liverpool monster. That, as the official in charge of the bellows of the latter instrument has only one *leg*, and a wooden "accessory," while the superintendent siffleur at Leeds possesses two *bona fide* *fleshy supports*, that organ must be credited with one *leg*, and that seems to be the only one it has to stand upon in the comparison. We take great interest in the controversy here, and hope to see some of your correspondents ere long. My love to the American. He knows what an organ is, he does. We think we have seen him on one, basely confined by a chain round his waist. Why not let him go, poor beggar? He's no madder than I am, and I live here, in perfect harmony, with five other fellows, but we want a flat seventh.

MAD TOM.

Hanwell, 6th August, 1870.

LEIPZIG.—Herr Stagemann has been starring in *Hans Heiling*, *Der Fliegende Holländer*, *Wilhelm Tell*, *Le Nozze*, and *Don Juan*. *Die Meistersinger* was to have been produced somewhere about this time, but, for some reason or other (on account of the war, perhaps), that great treat—for the Wagnerites—has been postponed.—The Stadttheater is now under a new manager, Herr F. Haase, as celebrated an actor in Germany as his English equivalent, Hare, is in England.

VIENNA.—Herr Abert's opera, *Astorga*, has been produced at the Carl Theater, under the auspices of Herr Sontheim. It proved a complete failure. The press are particularly unfavourable to it.—The post of Artistic Director has been offered by the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde to Herr Johannes Brahms, in the place of Herr Herbeck, resigned. As yet, Herr Brahms has not accepted.

[Aug. 20, 1870.]

MDLLE. NILSSON AND THE APPROACHING AMERICAN MUSICAL SEASON.

The coming of Mdlle. Nilsson, now so near at hand, is looked forward to with all the more interest from the fact that it is so long since we have been visited by a really great *prima donna*. Those we have had have become almost traditions. Grisi and Sontag were of the number, but both of these illustrious singers were past their prime when they arrived in this country. Grisi helped out her failing powers as a vocalist by her noble presence and fine acting, but at times it was the reverse of pleasant to listen to her endeavours to repeat her former triumphs in some great aria that had already passed beyond her reach. Bosio and Patti were young when they went from here, and it was reserved to Europe to mature their powers, and hear them at their best. Steffanone was great, but unreliable. La Grange stayed long enough to let us all witness the decay of her fine powers. Miss Kellogg, charming singer that she is, has never been able to cope successfully with the great tragic parts, and has given us satisfactorily only the comedy side of the lyric stage. Parepa was accepted as a *prima donna* on account of her great ability as a vocalist, but it was always somewhat under protest, and with much shutting of the eyes to the many obvious incongruities and shortcomings.

But Nilsson comes without any drawbacks. She is in the prime of her youth and beauty, in the meridian of her powers as a singer, at the full tide of her triumphs upon the European stage. She comes of a people who have already given to us certainly one of the greatest singers that ever lived, being born of humble parents, in the south of Sweden. She is the eighth child of the family.

As has been almost without exception the case with all truly musical natures, hers was one of inheritance, and, as has always happened, the musical instinct manifested itself at a very early age. Her father was an ardent lover of the art, and had charge of the music at the church in the little village of Husaby. He was but a peasant, but his life was refined by this beautiful art. He taught his son Carl the violin, and Christine, the little sister, would get the boy's fiddle, and pick out for herself on it the tunes she had heard him play. Her proficiency soon became so great that the neighbouring people came to listen and admire, and finally Carl took her with him to the country fairs at the market towns, and there she attracted great attention. Happily, she attracted that of the good Thornerjelm, a magistrate of Ljubny, who offered to provide for her musical education.

The offer was accepted, and Mdlle. Valerius afterward Baroness of Lenhusen, became her earliest instructor. The little peasant was soon put to school, and afterward sent to Stockholm and placed under the care of a composer, and teacher of talent, Mr. Franz Berwald. From Stockholm she went to Paris, and there studied carefully for three years before she went upon the stage. Her *début* was made in 1864, in Verdi's *Traviata* a character not specially to her taste, and in which she failed then to make a great success. Mozart's music suited her better, and in the *Magic Flute* she gained her earliest triumph. From that time to the present her career has been one of uninterrupted success. Marguerite in Gounod's *Faust*, Alice in *Robert le Diable*, Cherubino in the *Marriage of Figaro*, Lucia in Donizetti's opera, and Ophelia in Ambroise Thomas's *Hamlet* have been among her important rôles. Of late she has been singing at Drury Lane, in opposition to Patti at Covent Garden, and has, so far as popular enthusiasm goes, certainly borne away the palm. The marvellous purity of her voice, her great beauty, the excellence and loveliness of her private character, the charm of her acting which gains constantly in fervour, seem to be the principal elements of her success.

That she will be fully appreciated in this country there can scarcely be a doubt. Her renown as an oratorical singer is in no way inferior to that she possesses as a *prima donna*. At the Handel Festival in 1868 at the London Crystal Palace, and at the Birmingham Festival of the previous year, she took the same position that Mdlle. Parepa holds with us. It is sincerely to be hoped that the company that supports her will be a good one, and that the whole success of the enterprise may not be made to depend on her single talent. If she is really well supported we may look for a more brilliant season of opera than we have seen since the days of the Havana Italian company.—*New York Sun*.

CREDAT JUDÆUS APPELLA.—According to the Continental press, a French provincial manager has invented a mechanical *claque*, to supply the place of the human aforesaid, which was dear, and not particularly popular, having, on several occasions, been lustily hissed by the respectable portion of the audience. The mechanical *claque* consists, in the first place, of some hammers concealed in the four corners of the theatre, and which, when set going, imitate the sound of sticks rapped on the floor; and, in the second, of pairs of castagnettes covered with leather, and which, when struck together, produce a marvellous imitation of the clapping of hands. The wires leading from these castagnettes, situated under the rows of benches, terminate in a kind of massive keyboard, with six large wooden keys, in the manager's room. Whenever the manager thinks it necessary, he presses down these keys, or as many of them as he chooses, and a storm of applause breaks forth, electrifying the public, who, on the principle of "follow my leader"—a principle much more prevalent than most persons suppose—zealously continue the applause thus begun by the manager.

DICKENS'S FAVOURITE AUTHORS.

There are certain books of which Dickens liked to talk during his walks. Among his especial favourites were the writings of Cobbett, De Quincey, the *Lectures on Moral Philosophy* by Sydney Smith, and Carlyle's *French Revolution*. Of this latter Dickens said it was the book of all others which he read perpetually and of which he never tired—the book which always appeared more imaginative in proportion to the fresh imagination he brought to it, a book for inexhaustableness to be placed before every other book. When writing the "Tale of Two Cities," he asked Carlyle if he might see one of the books to which he referred in his history; whereupon Carlyle packed up and sent down to Gad's Hill all his reference volumes, and Dickens read them faithfully. But the more he read the more he was astonished to find how the facts had passed through the alembic of Carlyle's brain, and had come out and fitted themselves, each as a part of one great whole, making a compact, infallible, and unrivalled; and he always found himself turning away from the books of reference, and re-reading with increased wonder this marvellous new growth. There were certain books particularly hateful to him, and of which he never spoke except in terms of most ludicrous railing. Mr. Barlow, in *Sandford and Merton* he said, was the favourite enemy of his boyhood and his first experience of a bore. He had an almost supernatural hatred for Barlow, "because he was so very *instructive*, and always hinting doubt with regard to the veracity of 'Sinbad the Sailor,' and had no belief whatever in 'The Wonderful Lamp' or 'The Enchanted Horse.'" Dickens rattling his mental cane over the head of Mr. Barlow was as much better than any play as can be well imagined. He gloried in many of Hood's poems, especially in that biting "Ode to Rae Wilson," and he would gesticulate with a fine fervour the lines:—

". . . the hypocrites who ope Heaven's door
Obsequious to the sinful man of riches,—
But put the naked bare-legged poor
In parish stocks instead of breeches.

One of his favourite books was *Pepys's Diary*, the curious discovery of the key to which, and the odd characteristics of its writer, were a never-failing source of interest and amusement to him. The vision of Pepys hanging round the door of the theatre, hoping for an invitation to go in, not being able to keep away in spite of a promise he had made to himself that he would spend no more money foolishly, delighted him. Speaking one day of Gray, the author of the *Elegy*, he said: "No poet ever came walking down to posterity with so small a book under his arm." He preferred Smollett to Fielding, putting *Peregrine Pickle* above *Tom Jones*. Of the best novels by his contemporaries, he always spoke with warm commendation, and *Griffith Gaunt* he thought a production of very high merit. He was "hospitable to the thought" of all writers who were really in earnest, but at the first exhibition of floundering or inexactness he became an unbeliever. People with dislocated understandings he had no tolerance for.—*Atlantic Monthly*.

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WAIFS.

Herr Ferdinand Ludwig has left London for Germany.

Mr. Henry Haigh is engaged for the operatic performance at the Gaiety Theatre.

Fraschini is once more engaged by M. Bagier for the Theatre Italiens at Paris.

Don Ramon Vilanova, a Spanish composer of sacred music has just died at Barcelona, in his seventieth year.

Miss Laura Harris, who sang some seasons since at Her Majesty's Theatre, has been engaged for the San Carlos at Lisbon, in October.

The church of St. Andrew, Plaistow, has been completed and consecrated, and will, we are informed, be supplied with an efficient choir.

Mdlle. Anna Bishop is about to visit Canada with a company from New York, for a series of out-door concerts at Toronto, Montreal, Quebec, and the other chief cities.

The Nilsson party will leave Paris for America on the 27th of August, and will give their first concert in New York on the 19th of September.

Watson's Art Journal describing a performance of "Since first I saw your Face," at the recent Beethoven Festival, says it was sung in "a palm-smiting manner."

An Association has just been established in West Cornwall, called "The West Cornwall Plain Song Association," to promote the use of the plain song music of the Church, and the dignity of the Eucharistic service.

There is a talk at Dresden of building a large theatre in the Neustadt. Hitherto the drama has had its chief — we may say only — home in the well-known *Hof-theater*, which was burnt down some time ago, and is rebuilding.

Non è vero, secondo Filippi, che la musica sia per il popolo. No ; essa è fatta soltanto "per le persone educate, per quelle che assistendo a un dramma in musica debbono conoscerne ed apprezzarne le ragioni storiche ed estetiche ! " — Starebbero freschi allora gl'Impresari !

Signor Francesco Coletti, the best modern writer of Italian farces, has just published, at Milan, a collection of his farces in two volumes, which afford the reader nearly as much amusement as if they were being acted before him ; such genuine fun and humour are to be found in these pages.

At a recent meeting of the Worcester Cathedral Restoration Committee Lord Lyttelton and Sir John Packington reported the result of the appeal to the diocese for funds. Including the contributions of Earl Dudley, and the Dean and Chapter, the sum obtained was nearly £16,000.

Madame Cora De Wilhorst (Miss Withers that was, of New York) has been singing with moderate success in Paris ; and has now been engaged for the Italian Opera at Homburg, to sing, with Patti, such parts as Margaret of Valois, in *The Huguenots*, and Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni*.

The Life of our Saviour, written by Dickens for his children, is to be published soon. Blanchard Jerrold says in an article in the last number of the *Gentleman's Magazine* :— " *The Life of our Saviour* was written by Charles Dickens to guide the hearts of his children ; and if ever a labour of love was done by that most affectionate nature, this was pre-eminently it. By the eloquent pages that now will shortly be put within the reach of every English and American household, the children of Charles Dickens were taught their first lessons of Christian love and Christian chivalry."

Oxford wit at Commemoration-tide is generally obvious, and the puns are, as a rule, intelligible even to the mildest of undergraduates ; but we question whether anything more common-place was ever perpetrated than the cry for "some *Corfe* mixture," which was heard from the gallery when Dr. Corfe took his place as conductor for the performance of the ode at the Chancellor's Installation. Bad as the joke was, however, it served to raise a laugh, and resulted in a word of advice to the worthy doctor, that he must be content for once to play second fiddle to Sir Frederick Ouseley, who, as the professor, occupied the seat of honour.

Of our two prime donne, an American contemporary says :—

" It is hard to imagine anything more exquisite than that wondrous voice of the lovely Swede, whose liquid purity and crystal clearness reminds the heart of the fountain of molten diamonds celebrated in the Eastern fable. Nilsson has been reproached with a want of dramatic fervour, and it is true that her voice is of too celestial a quality to adapt itself readily to the accents of earthly passion ; but the innocence of Marguerite and the sublime devotion of Alice have never found a more perfect interpreter. In the latter rôle (in *Robert le Diable*) she is the embodiment of a guardian angel. Patti has changed wonderfully little since the days when New York first went wild over the marvellous little singer. The rosebud has bloomed into a rose, that is all. Beauty and voice have alike developed into fuller perfection, and are alike unchanged in every other respect. She is still the dark-eyed, winsome damsel of pre-cession days, and her voice still possesses that exquisite, bird-like carol which distinguishes her notes from any songstress I ever heard. Patti reminds one of 'the lark that at heaven's gate sings,' but the voice of Nilsson seems a strain from the other side of the gate."

DICKENS'S HOME AT GAD'S HILL.

The spot is one of the loveliest in Kent, and must always be remembered as the last residence of Charles Dickens. He used to declare his firm belief that Shakspere was specially fond of Kent, and that the poet chose Gad's Hill and Rochester for the scenery of his plays from intimate personal knowledge of their localities. He said he had no manner of doubt but that one of Shakspere's haunts was the old inn at Rochester, and that this conviction came forcibly upon him one night as he was walking that way, and discovered Charles's Wain over the chimney, just as Shakspere has described it, in words put into the mouth of the carrier in King Henry the Fourth. There is no prettier place in England than Gad's Hill in all England for the earliest and latest flowers, and Dickens chose it, when he had arrived at the fulness of his fame and prosperity, as the home in which he most wished to spend the remainder of his days. When a boy he would often pass the house with his father, and frequently said to him, " If ever I have a dwelling of my own, Gad's Hill Place is the house I mean to buy."

In that beautiful retreat he has for many years been accustomed to welcome his friends, and find relaxation from the crowded life of London. On the lawn, playing at bowls, in the Swiss summer-house, charmingly shaded by green leaves, he always seemed the best part of summer, beautiful as the season is in the delightful region where he lived. In a letter written not long ago to a friend in America, he thus describes his home :—

" Divers birds sing here all day, and the nightingales all night. The place is lovely, and in perfect order. I have put five mirrors in the Swiss chalet (where I write), and they reflect and refract, in all kinds of ways, the leaves that are quivering at the windows, and the great fields of waving corn, and the sail-dotted river. My room is up among the branches of the trees ; and the birds and the butterflies fly in and out, and the green branches shoot in at the open windows, and the lights and shadows of the clouds come and go with the rest of the company. The scent of the flowers, and indeed of everything that is growing for miles and miles, is most delicious."

There he could be most thoroughly enjoyed, for he never seemed so cheerfully at home anywhere else. At his own table, surrounded by his family and a few guests, old acquaintances from town,—among them sometimes Forster, Carlyle, Reade, Collins, Layard, Macleay, Stone, Macready, Talfourd,—he was always the choicest and liveliest companion. He was not what is called in society a professed talker, but he was something far better and rarer.—*Atlantic Monthly*.

—o—
To the Editor of the "Musical World."

SIR,—Your musical critic has made a serious mistake in his report of the concert at the Crystal Palace, which I hope you will allow me to correct. He speaks of the 4,500 certificated singers connected with us as though these were the only results of our efforts in individual examination. The truth is that, during the past year only, we have granted 9,872 Elementary Certificates, and 1,827 Intermediate Certificates. The full total of those who have successfully passed is—68,000 Elementary, and 16,000 Intermediate ; besides 250 Members, and 140 Advanced—making, altogether, more than 84,000. As some intelligent friends have been misled by your critic in this matter, and as this constant process of individual effort and examination never pauses and never lessens, and is a thing to be proud of, I trust you will insert this note.—Yours, &c.,

JOHN CURWEN.

Plaistow, E., August 13.

OLD-FASHIONED MUSIC OF THE FUTURE.—Some short time since, Mad. Alboni was asked by a lady, with whom she was staying on a visit, for a line from her hand. Taking up a score of Rossini's *Cenerentola*, she wrote on the title-page : " This is really the music of the future."

Say, my Heart, can this be Love ?

BY HENRY C. WATSON.

Ever still he hovers round me,
And his presence wakes a thrill ;
Yst, while others hourly praise me,
He alone is mute and still.
Though sweet flattery pleases ever,
And the sternest hearts can move,
Praise is tame unless he praises—
Say, my heart, can this be love ?
Wayward heart, can this be love ?

Night and day his image haunts me,
In each breeze his sighs I hear :
Some strange feeling thrills my bosom,
Is it love ?—it is not fear !
Fear, oh no ! those eyes so tender,
Voice so soft, his kindness prove,
Not from fear do I so tremble—
Say, my heart, can this be love ?
Wayward heart, can this be love ?

He shall never know my feeling ;
I will hide it from all eyes !
Silly heart, thy love concealing,
Let no tell-tale blushes rise.
Should he never seek to woo me,
Time my heart can never move ;
Vainly would another sue me—
Own, sad heart ! this, this is love !
Wayward heart—ah, this is love !

New York papers assert that Madame Lind-Goldschmidt will sing in the United States during the autumn and winter.

A correspondent of a contemporary reminds us that in the first Great Exhibition of 1851, were exhibited sets of steel bars, straight and circular, for use instead of church bells, giving a clear ringing note, and much cheaper. He asks whether any reader can give information as to where such bars can be obtained.

Mr. Willert Beale, son of the late Mr. Fredrick Beale, who was the manager of the Royal Italian Opera, when it was opened in 1847, is conductor of Signor Mario's farewell tour. Signor Mario will have the co-operation of Fräulein Liebhart (vocalist), Signor Sivori (violin), and the Chevalier de Kontski (pianist).

There are two competing opera-houses in the capital of Catalonia at the Liceo, with Mesdames Marziali, De Baillou, Ferrer, Mas-Porcill, Signori D'Antoni, Minette, Varvaro, Baraldi, Merely, Rodas, and Bargaglia; and the other at the Circo, with Mesdames Peralta, Ariot, Scalchi, Trebelli; Signori Graziani (tenor), Palermi, Bettini, Fagotti, Padilla, Gassier, Junca, Zucchini and Ronconi, to whom the Sisters Marchisio, will be added for a few nights. The Circo has decidedly the more formidable troupe.

The advisability of the use of the orchestra in church, though frequently debated, is seldom put to the test that it is worthy of notice, that at the recent consecration at Arksley Church, near Doncaster, by the Archbishop of York, the absence of an organ rendered some such expedient necessary, and a militia band accompanied the choir throughout the service. As there seems to have been no lack of money for the restoration, which has been carried forward under the superintendence of Mr. Scott, we conclude that the organ will soon be supplied.—*Choir*.

A discovery in printing has recently attracted notice, namely, photographing the copies of the parts from the original score, and transferring the photograph to the printing-press. This process is a great saving of time, and secures accuracy in the instrumental parts, the correction of which occupies so long, and is a tedious interruption to the continuity of rehearsals. In Mr. Sullivan's *Overture di ballo*, at the first rehearsal in St. George's Hall for the Birmingham Festival, there was not a note to correct in the copies, all the string parts having been supplied by the new process.

As Madame Patti (Marquise de Caux) was unable to go to Homburg on account of the war, the committee of the Birmingham Musical Festival offered her an engagement, but the terms asked by the *prima donna* being £200 for each time of singing, which for eight performances would amount to £1,600, it need scarcely be added, that the negotiation came promptly to an end. This is an illustration of the pernicious "star" system, which has the effect of making *prime donne* believe that their services are indispensable. Firmness on the part of the managers would soon undeceive them.—*Athenaeum*.

Whatever degree of truth there may be in the report which has gone the round of the Church papers with reference to St. David's Cathedral, there can be very little question that the services are rendered in anything but a creditable manner. According to the account given by the correspondents of the *Church Times* and its contemporaries, the service is not even choral, and Tate and Brady furnish the hymnal of the congregation. At first sight such a statement seems to be incredible, but the ominous fact that it remains uncontradicted lends no slight weight in favour of its truth.—*Choir*.

The example of the Queen in providing English part music as one of the attractions of her last "garden party" was, we are glad to see, followed by Sir Edmund and Lady Lechmere, in the entertainment they offered to the Prince and Princess Christian, at Rhydd Court, near Worcester. A trip up the Severn in two steam frigates formed a part of this excursion; and on a raised platform in the vessel where the Royal guests were assembled, was stationed a party of glee singers, including three lay vicars of Worcester Cathedral. On their return to Sir Edmund's mansion, a selection of glees and madrigals was performed on the lawn, including German and English compositions.—*Choir*.

Old and middle-aged Italian opera-house frequenters will be shocked to learn the misfortunes which have befallen Signor Tamburini, the once-renowned baritone-bass. He had divided a large fortune in Paris, where he resided since his retirement from the stage, amongst his children, reserving only a portion of capital, which was left in the hands of his eldest son, who was an "*ageni de change*." Heavy speculations on the Bourse, and the fall of prices on account of the war completely ruined the younger Tamburini, who committed suicide last week. Although the father has lost all his earnings by this sad event, he has, fortunately, an affectionate son-in-law in Signor Gardoni, to provide for his old age; Signor Tamburini being now upwards of seventy.—*Athenaeum*.

REVIEWS.

Select Practice for the Pianoforte, consisting of Forty-two Progressive Lessons, intended as an Introduction to the Works of the Great Masters, selected, edited, and fingered by JULES BENEDICT. [London: Duncan Davison & Co.]

The title of this work is itself a recommendation. Bearing in mind with what distressingly vague notions pianoforte improvers (and some pianoforte teachers) choose subjects for study, the term "Select Practice" brings comfort, especially as the themes are progressive, and act as an "Open, Sesame!" to the works of the great masters. The name of Mr. Benedict makes satisfaction complete. Nobody could wish a safer guide than this distinguished pianist and musician, or hesitate to follow him in implicit reliance upon his directions. The field from which Mr. Benedict has selected his examples is a wide one, embracing composers as various in character as Cherubini, Hummel, Gluck, Bellini, Handel, Dussek, Haydn, Liszt, Schubert, Beethoven, and J. S. Bach. This being the case, it is hardly necessary to say that thoughtful students may find in the work before us an epitome of the pianoforte *répertoire*, and so get a first insight into the diverse styles it is necessary they should know. A progressive character is well sustained from beginning to end. Commencing with a simple *volkslied*, by Weber, the work concludes with a *presto* by Mendelssohn; and takes the learner from one extreme to the other by stages so easy that he may well be surprised to find the journey so pleasant. Mr. Benedict has arranged all the pieces with a due regard to their educational character, and his fingering serves as a guide to wellnigh every passage likely to be met with elsewhere. For all these reasons we give the work our heartiest recommendation.

Twenty Popular Melodies for the Pianoforte, selected, arranged, and fingered by JULES BENEDICT. [London: Duncan Davison & Co.]

This extract from the author's "Instructions in the Art of Playing the Pianoforte" will be found very valuable by young students. The melodies are well known, with few exceptions, and their arrangement is simple enough for the most elementary use.

The Major and Minor Scales for the Pianoforte, with Preliminary Remarks and fingered by JULES BENEDICT. [London: Duncan Davison & Co.]

It is unnecessary for us to point out the supreme importance which belongs to a correct knowledge of the pianoforte scales. No time nor attention can be thrown away upon this essential study; and the publishers of Mr. Benedict's pianoforte instruction-book have done well to print the chapter on scales in a separate form. The fingering in all cases may not be that usually adopted, but Mr. Benedict supplies the alternative as well as his own suggestions; and it must be remembered, moreover, that anything from so great an authority carries with it no little weight. Let these scales be once mastered, and the student is more than half-prepared to face any executive difficulty.

My Nora. Song. Words by T. J. Ouseley, Esq.; Music by ARTHUR FOX [London: Duncan Davison & Co.]

The words of this song are very graceful, and, though sentimental enough to gratify the most *exigent* of drawing-room tenors, have no trace of the sickness affecting many of their kind. Mr. Fox has written very appropriate music. The melody has sufficient character to distinguish it from the mass of tunes poured forth by song-composers; and the accompaniment shows in addition to correctness, a facile adaption to the changing sentiment of the poetry. We see no reason why this song should not win favour both in public and private.

Two Epitaphs. Herrick. (As One Composition.) For Three Equal Voices. With Pianoforte Accompaniment by J. McMURDIE, Mus. B. Oxon. [London: Lamborn Cook & Co.]

We think the design of this work unhappy. The two epitaphs, though each good by itself, do not harmonize, either in style or subject, while even the grammatical "person" is different in the one to what it is in the other. The result is that the transition from epitaph to epitaph has the effect of a very unpleasant jerk. Mr. McMurdie has endeavoured to imitate the formalism of old English music, and to some extent with success. The composition, however, is not a pleasant one.

Journal of the London Society of Amateur Flute-Players. No. 5, "Sonata for Flute and Pianoforte," by G. A. MACFARREN. [London: Rudall, Rose, Carte, & Co.]

The amateur flute-player who can take part with efficiency in this important work may pride himself upon no small skill. Mr. Macfarren has produced a regularly-constructed sonata, of full average length. Moreover, he has brought to it all the resources of his undoubted talent, and thus paid the special public for whom he wrote a compliment we hope they appreciate. Without discussing the work minutely, we may say the flautists have now a classical composition of their own worthy all the attention they can bestow.

"A PRODIGY;" A TALE OF MUSIC.*

A man's written works may fairly be considered as affording an accurate indication, no less of his acquirements than of himself, his mind, and the manner and fashion of it. But it may be doubted whether a three volume novel is in this sense to be regarded as an "opus," an *εργον*, the outgrowth of the man, or an accident of a particular mood assumed for the occasion. And, indeed, it is well that this should be so; for otherwise we should be driven to say that the author of *A Prodigy* was a gentleman (or lady) of the most confiding simplicity, combined with the weakest credulity. For what are we called upon to believe? First, that a child of ten years old may possess prodigious talents for music, for conversation, for repartee, for practical joking, along with the most headstrong violence of passion and of will, and the most complete absence of wisdom in opinion and propriety of conduct—an imp of darkness and an angel of light at one and the same time. Secondly, we are to believe that we live in a world where a man residing in an insignificant town, without a pound to start with, may, by the time he has reached the age of 50, amass a stupendous fortune; that he may, simultaneously with the purchase of a landed estate, be created a peer of the realm, without either having had a seat in Parliament, or having, so far as we know, done one atom of good to his fellow-men; and that Royalty may invite itself to visit him, *en famille*, out of curiosity to see his newly-built palace. Again, we must believe that the mother of a prodigy of genius, in whose life and its success her own life is entirely bound up, upon whom she lavishes affection at once extravagant and unjust, may with little apparent difficulty be brought to give up the darling of her heart for the sake of a second husband as rich as Croesus, and the acquaintance of a month. We confess to thinking that events such as these do not occur in the world in which we are living, and we are very glad they do not.

This marvellous young gentleman, after fascinating half Germany with his music, his beauty, his waywardness, and his curls, before he has reached the age of twenty, goes in search of the young sister of a school friend, who like Mr. Dickens's Smike, seemed to have been hardly used by every body, but unlike him, came to a miserable and untimely end by being drowned on the very night that would have made him a hero. The young lady was worth the search, being represented as a very queen of beauty and loveliness, and endowed with every conceivable charm and grace of person. She was to have been a *danseuse*, and it is to be feared that the indispensable training for her profession had sadly interfered with other less showy branches of education; her mind had received little cultivation, and we suspect it was not capable of receiving much more. The Prodigy finds her at last in most questionable company, has his first interview with her on a certain evening; at midnight he runs away with her; by good fortune a carriage and a priest are at hand, and the happy pair are made man and wife before morning. But, angel though Marie is in form and feature, she can deceive. Her husband goes to England to fulfil a professional engagement; she chooses to remain in Germany, on the plea of approaching maternity, but nevertheless follows him within a fortnight, that she may appear in London as a ballet-dancer. Her *début* is unsuccessful, an uproar ensues at the opera; Charles, whose suspicions of her arrival in England have been aroused, rushes to her arms, to not be recognized (for his wife has become insane) but to be disowned, cursed, and ultimately stabbed by a knife, which, we are informed, "she drew from her bosom," though we should rather have supposed it came from under her pillow. The wound is not mortal, for a hint is given at the end of the story that Charles must probably married a little Quaker girl whom he had known in childhood, and whom he had met on some few subsequent occasions.

The reader will have gathered from this survey that there is no lack of startling incident in the book, and if this were all we cared to look for in a novel, we might heartily commend it. But our sense of the fitness of things refuses to be entirely satisfied with a work of fiction unless it introduces to us some character to admire, to love, or at least to be interested about. Now, there is nothing of the sort here. We cannot be brought to care a pinch of snuff about any one of the actors in the drama. To be sure Marie is devoted to her husband; that is, we are told so, but her conduct and even her language fail to show it. Yet, if there is no one to love, there are many to hate, especially a grand villain, who reminds us of Wilkie Collins's Fosco, with much of his cunning and very little of his cleverness. We close the book with this very devout hope, that no one belonging to us may have a son of such surpassing genius for music as Charles Einstern, or a daughter with such a passion for dancing as his unfortunate wife.

Secret of Speke.

THE "Rhin Allemand" has been set in Paris by M. Deboux, M. Félicien David, M. Vaucozat, M. Jules Lefort, M. Paul Herion, M. Ernest Poignée, M. Michel de Borse.

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